Merciful and Compassionate

By/Faten Sabri

Translated by the English language translation team at the Center (HathaHuda)

We feed you only for the countenance of God:

In the first two years of our stay in Lagos, Nigeria, we lived in hotel apartments so that it would be easy for us to look for a suitable house near the kids' schools. Usually, after I returned from any trip, I was keen to bring simple presents for all janitors and the workers, and share with them food and drinks. At that time, spreading the word of Islam (da'wa) was not in my mind; my intention was only to get close to God by giving gifts. When we decided to leave that place to move on to the new house, we were surprised that everyone in the area was crying! The driver told us that they have never met a Muslim family of such high manners who spread the spirit of love and fraternity and wanted to reward us. After hearing that from the driver, I had two thoughts. Should I feel good that we made their hearts happy? Or should I feel sad about the condition that the Muslims are in, which gave the people of that country such a bad impression about Muslim people in general!

I told the driver that we already got our reward which was their happiness, and I then remembered the verse: **We only feed you for the sake of God. We want from you neither compensation, nor gratitude**[1], so I got relieved.

My mercy encompasses all things:

I remember the story of the French language teacher. She was an African from a country called Benin which was adjacent to Lagos where we stayed. After the lecture, I told her that I needed a housemaid who could speak French, for my kids and I could practice the French language with her. I was surprised when she replied to me: I am ready to work for you!

[1] (Qur'an 76: 9).

I told her: You are my teacher, and you have my all respect!

She said: You are very kind, but I am really in need of this job. You know that I come from Benin adjacent to this city, and I need a place to stay. I will clean the house for you at morning, and work in the center at evening. Also, I noticed that you are very friendly even though your Holy Book (Qur'an) never talked about love, nor even about the love of the Creator to His servants. How can He love them while He tests them and restricts His provision?!

I replied to her: Regarding the place you need to stay in, you are welcome with no job and for free. We already have an annex for the workers, and you can share the dorms with them. Regarding what you've said about the Qur'an, have you ever read the Qur'an?

She replied: No, but I have heard about it.

I told her: If you read the Qur'an, you will see what is mentioned in it about the mercy and love God has for His servants. But God's love to His servants is different from the love humans have with each other because love in humans' case is a need that the loving person seeks and finds in the beloved, but God does not need us, humans. Hence, His love for us is out of generosity, kindness and mercy. The love coming from the Powerful to the powerless; coming from the Free of need to the needy. The love coming from the Competent and Mighty to the helpless; coming from the Most Great to the humble. The love which comes with sagacity and wisdom.

She asked: How come?

I replied: Wouldn't you bring your child to the operation room to have his/her stomach opened? Wouldn’t you fully trust the doctor's insight, his love to your baby, and his consideration to save him/her from the illness?

She replied: How come He loves His creations while He limits their freedom and doesn't permit them to do whatever they like to do?
Have you never heard about individualism? Have you ever heard about this evolving concept, which means that the individual's decisions should be based on their benefits and pleasures? The individual is the focus of attention, so the individual's interests should be above the nation's considerations and above the society's and religion's effects. Besides, people should not be prohibited to gender transition; they should be able to do whatever they like to do and wear and behave in public in the way they want to, as the street is everyone's.
I said: Do you allow your children to do whatever they wish because you love them? Would you let your little son to jump out of the window or to play with an electric cord?

I also told her: Your statement where you said that the street is everyone's is correct, but your understanding of it is wrong. If you were living with a group of people in the same house, would you ever accept one of the house members to urinate in the hall, on the same concept that the house belongs to everyone? Would you ever accept living in this house with no laws and rules to govern it?
A human who has complete freedom becomes an ugly being, as it has been unquestionably proven that the human is unable to handle this kind of freedom. Individualism can never take the place of collectivism regardless of the individual's power or influence.
Community members are classes that cannot survive without each other and can never be independent. Some of them are soldiers, doctors, nurses, and judges. How can any of them outweigh their benefit and personal

interest over others to achieve their happiness and be the focus of attention?

She said: How can we achieve happiness then?

I replied: the meaning of happiness in individualism is victory, domination, and the possession of technology. But in Islam, true happiness is a content heart, a successful marriage, a spacious house, a good neighbor, and a comfortable vehicle, with sharing and cooperation.

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Although the Islamic Civilization was formed by a mixture of different people and tribes, it produced accountability and reward systems, along with duties and rights. The person is punished for his crimes, but he is also rewarded in other cases. Islam liberated the individual from his previous prejudices and led him to his pure inner-self to live like an honest, social civil who lives in a community, respects its laws, and appreciates his intellectual potential along with his ability to coexist beautifully with others.

A nation that aspires to progress and builds a higher goal emerges from the concept of a single identity. Everyone has their ideas and capabilities, but applying these ideas requires teamwork, and thus everyone is equal with whatever they present. So, Islam has presented the perfect relationship of the individual with his society.

I proceeded: The individual is only a small and integral part of society; this makes a peaceful and secure society because if the balance between classes is disturbed, conflicts will arise, and it will lead to dissatisfaction in society. Money is no longer the highest standard that distinguishes its owner from others, nor the power or leadership of the world is recognized because of money. The leader in the Islamic government is not evaluated by the money he possesses. Still, by the knowledge, morals,

and justice he has, and these were the qualities with which they were able to advance and achieve victories one after the other.

Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him said:

The example of the believers regarding mutual love, affection, and fellow-feeling, consists of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole-body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever.[2]

She said: Individuality is directly related to homosexuality, so why do you not like homosexuals? Their tendencies are a natural genetic issue and tendency, and we must respect them.

As I know, it is a natural genetic issue, and we must respect it.

I said to her: Would you respect a thief's tendency to steal? It is an inclination too, but in both cases, it is an abnormal proclivity. It's against the human instinct, and aggression against nature; it should be rectified.

God created the human and guided him on the right path. He also gave him free will to choose between the path of righteousness and the way of evil.

And We showed him the two ways. [3]

So, we find that homosexuality was rarely seen in the societies which prohibit it. At the same time, the percentage of homosexuals is high in the ambient which permits and encourages such a behavior. The surrounding ambient and teachings determine the probability of one to be homosexual.

God glory be to Him said about the people of Prophet Lot peace be upon him:

And Lot, when he said to his people, “Do you commit lewdness no people anywhere have ever

[2] (narrated by Muslim).
[3] (Qur'an: 90-10).

committed before you?" "You lust after men rather than women. You are an excessive people." And his people's only answer was to say, "Expel them from your town; they are purist people."[4]

This verse assures that homosexuality is neither inherited nor relates to genetic code composition, for the people of Prophet Lot were the first to innovate such an obscenity; this is in line with an eminent scientific study which ensures that homosexuality has nothing to do with inherited genes.[5]

The identity of a human being is continually changing. For example, it could change according to their watched channels, used technologies, or the liking for a soccer team, as globalization made him or her so complicated. A betrayer is now portrayed as someone with a point of view. A homosexual is described as a normal-behaving person, who thoroughly enjoys legal rights that enabled him or her to participate in public debates. Also, it is assumed that we must advocate him or her and strengthen ties too.

Superiority now is for the technology holder. Hence, if a homosexual has the power sources (technology), he or she will surely pass his convictions; this caused spoilage in the relation of the human being, society, and the Creator.

By a direct correlation among individualism and homosexuality, human nature, which human beings belong to, is dispersed, and the family's concepts were dropped.[6]

Then, the Westerns started setting up resolutions to get rid of individualism; this is because keeping this

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[4] (Qur'an: 7: 80-82).

[5] **https://www.nature.com** https://kaheel7.net/?p=15851

[6] From the article on the concept of absolute individuality and the individual in the nation, written by: Marwan Sabah, Al-Watan newspaper.

perception will undoubtedly cause the loss of the accomplishments modern man has achieved, the same way it will cause the failure of the notion of Family.
So, till now, the Westerns have been suffering from a population decrease, which has led to attracting immigrants.
Believing in God and respecting the Divine laws He created for us, as well as the determination to following His instructions and avoiding wrong deeds, is the way to happiness in the worldly life and the hereafter.

And never has the gift of your Lord been restricted:

My teacher ended her conversation by telling me: How do non-religious countries develop and religious countries go down although God loves the latter (religious countries)?
I said: Does the school headmaster reward his son who failed with a success certificate because he is his son? Some rules and norms must be followed, and on that basis of these sets, we define who succeeds and who fails.
However, this does not affect the fact that the headmaster loves his son more than anyone else. Indeed, he (the son) is who carries his name and will be his only heir.
I also told her: The universe is just like a school; it has its laws and norms. The disbelievers achieved the materialistic and technological progress because they applied the universal laws and the Divine norms to establish good political systems and robust educational and pedagogical systems with methodological standards.
This materialistic progress is only for those who apply the Divine norms and the universal laws; this proves that the worldly success doesn't favor a white or a black; “justice” is one of God’s names and injustice is one of the ugliest

acts God warned us, humans, from committing. But a disbeliever still won't be given the reward of the Hereafter which is only for God's servants and lovers.
The Messenger of God peace be upon him said:
God does not wrong a believer a good deed as he is given blessing for it in this world and will be rewarded for it in the Hereafter. But the disbeliever is given in the world the reward for good deeds, he has performed and when he comes to the Hereafter, there is no good deeds for which he can be rewarded. [7]
God Almighty gives them what they deserve in this world, considering what they have of goodness and what they exert of justice.
God, glory be to Him, may support a nation of disbelievers over a Muslim nation as a punishment for its sins, just like what happened in the battle of Uhud.
And God had certainly fulfilled His promise to you when you were killing the enemy by His permission until [the time] when you lost courage and fell to disputing about the order [given by the Prophet] and disobeyed after He had shown you that which you love. Among you are some who desire this world, and among you are some who desire the Hereafter. Then He turned you back from them [defeated] that He might test you. [8]
The Messenger of God said:
God Almighty shared out your character between you as He divided provision between you. God Almighty bestows wealth on those He loves and those He does not love. He only gives faith to those He loves. [9]

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[7] (True hadith).
[8] (Qur'an 3: 152).
[9] (True hadith).

She replied: Well if I believe in Him right now, will He make me wealthy and give me a house?

I said: If your father didn't make you wealthy or give you a house, would you deny his existence?

God is waiting for us:

There is a beautiful story about a group of Chinese atheists who were wondering about God’s mercy. One of them asked: How come the Creator gives us instincts, then after that, He asks us not to use them? How come He gives us money, and after that, He asks us to lose it by giving it to charities? How come He gives us time and then He asks us to waste it in worship? Isn't that a proof of His cruelty?

I replied to him: That means you believe in Him, but you just question whether He is merciful or not?

He said: No, I don't believe in Him because He is cruel.

I said to him: Your assumption that He is cruel is just itself evidence that He exists. Sorry, but you are contradicting yourself. God is above from being unjust or evil. He is the Merciful Compassionate; His mercy is the absolute mercy. Anyways, the cruelty you assume is not evidence against God’s existence, but it's against whether He is merciful or not.

I also told him: When you wish to release your instincts, you tend to be a slave to them (instincts). Yet, God wants you to become a master over them. He wants you to be a reasonable, wise person who manages his instincts. At the same time, you are not supposed to restrict them. It is better to direct them towards upgrading your soul and elevating yourself.

I asked him: Do you have children?

He said: Yes.

I said: If you obligate your children to devote some time to study to have an honorable intellectual rank in the future, while the children's desire is just to play, are you considered an oppressive father?

I was sincerely astonished, seeing the group fly from excitement about my response. Then, one of them asked me: What can we do now, considering that we have been distanced from God a lot? Will He forgive us if we came back? We have offended Him a lot.

I told him: You just offended yourselves. God, the Almighty does not need us, but we need Him. Anyway, what would you do if your disobedient son stayed away from you? Would you make him feel ashamed? Would you ask him to shoot himself?

He replied: I would keep waiting for him to come back, and pardon him if he came.

I told him: So, God is waiting for you now.

He burst into excitement and chanted loudly: God is waiting for us. He chanted again. Then everyone turned to each other saying: God is waiting for us.

God's messenger, Muhammad, peace be upon him said: **God is more pleased with the repentance of His servant than anyone of you who loses his riding beast in a barren land while it was carrying his food and drink. He despairs of ever finding it, so he comes to a tree and lies down in its shade, having given up all hope of finding his beast that he rides, then whilst he is there like that, suddenly he sees it standing near him, so he takes hold of its reins and because of his great joy he says, 'O God, You are my slave, and I am Your Lord!' -- i.e., he makes a mistake because of his great joy.** [10]

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[10] (Narrated by Bukhari).

I also remember a personal experience I witnessed with a famous Indian actor who has converted to Hinduism so far. We discussed the mercy of God and His affection towards His servants.

One of them asked: How come God sometimes depicts Himself as the Forgiving and the Merciful, yet He becomes the Severely Punishing?

I replied: God is forgiving and merciful with those whose sins are committed without persistence because of their weak human character. He is also forgiving for the sins that do not intend to defy the Creator (Allah). Indeed, the Almighty destroys the one who defies Him and denies His existence; He also destroys the one who draws Him in the form of an idol or an animal. I was then inappropriately interrupted by the actor.

He said: These are minor issues that God doesn't care about.

I told him: If you insult an animal, no one can blame you, but if you insult your parents, you'll be reprimanded severely.

Don't look how small the sin is but look to the greatness of whom you disobeyed.

Then follow me so that God will love you:

I had one of the most challenging experiences with two Christian South African siblings, and the brother's wife, who was a Buddhist Thai. The woman and her brother were white South Africans, and they were remarkably tall and massive, while the brother's wife was very short and tiny. I was confused at first by the differences in the heights, the body frames, and the visitors' beliefs.

I was supposed to start my conversation with them by a short presentation about Islam.

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Instead, I was surprised with the fluency of non-stop talking by the South African woman; she barely gave me a chance to utter one word. She kept saying:
“God is love. God loves you. God died for you.”
I then held myself up and said to her: Alright. I'm ready to embrace Christianity if you answered my questions. The visitor cheered up, and she went to bring her sister-in-law to let her listen to our conversation; she was in another corner of the Mosque, taking pictures. I understood that the South African lady had been trying to convince her Buddhist sister-in-law to convert to Christianity since a long time, and she thought that if I accept converting to Christianity, it would be a motivation for her sister-in-law to do the same.
In the presence of her sister-in-law, the visitor said to me: Well, I'm ready, tell me your questions.
I said to her: You said that God loves me and that He died to forgive my sins.
She said: Yes, that's right.
I asked:

- Would the love I have for my son make me kill myself to forgive his sins?
- With all His love for me, is God unable to forgive me if I just repent and turned back to Him?
- Can the love, God has for me make Him punish me for a sin committed by someone else (Adam's sin), and then grant me salvation just if I believed in the death of another person on a cross, not for my good deeds?
- Was God with all His love to Jesus unable to protect him from killing and crucifixion?
- How come God may die when He is Ever-living and does not die in your creed? Isn't this a contradiction?

- According to what you believe, when God died for three days, who was managing the universe in His claimed absence? Who gave the provisions, lives and caused death?
- God is Omnipotent, does it suit His majesty to be fixed to a wooden beam? To be tortured to death as you claim, especially that the crucified person is considered cursed in your book?
- In which chapter in your book, did Jesus say that he is God?
- When Jesus cried and prayed to God for help when they wanted to crucify him, did he pray to himself?

Exalted is God, God the Almighty is High above what they say.

And [for] their saying, "Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah." And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain. Rather, Allah raised him to Himself. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise. [11]

God is Perfect; He does not need to die for us. He gives life and death, so He did not die, nor was He resurrected. He saved His Prophet Jesus and protected him as He helps and protects His chosen believers.

Then We will save Our messengers and those who have believed. Thus, it is an obligation upon Us that We save the believers. [12]

As I was asking my questions, I noticed her confusion, fret, and peeping gazes to her sister-in-law, and I felt that

[11] (Qur'an 4: 157-158).
[12] (Qur'an 10: 103).

she got worried from the influence of my talk on her sister-in-law. So, she told me that she is in a hurry, and without replying to any of my questions she said to me: I liked your dress so much, then she hugged me tightly to the point that I was frightened. She then grabbed her sister in law's hand and left the Mosque right away!

I also remember facing a similar situation with a religious Christian, a French man.

He said to me: God loves you, He died for you.

I asked him: Who told you that? God Himself or Jesus?

He replied: Saint Paul did. He was a smart and educated man. His educational level was the same level as a person who holds three doctorates in our time.

I said: What is the relation between Paul's educational level and the Divine Revelation?

He told me: He saw a vision telling him that the Almighty God died for us.

I told him: The Divine Revelation comes from God, including the revelation descending with the Divine Messages. On the other hand, it's the devilish revelation that comes in the form of dreams to humans. He laughed at my response.

I proceeded: Human knowledge is a human production that is subjected to correctness and error. It includes scientific achievement or inspiring literature, and it has nothing to do with Divine Revelation.

Finally, I told him: I do not have much information on this point, but I am shocked from a person who leaves the right message of the Messiah which is a Divine Revelation and goes for a vision of a person who had never met the Messiah during his life such as Paul, and that is just because he is educated! This is insensible and is in all means opposing to both instinct and rationale. Paul was

one of the Messiah's worst enemies who tried to destroy his religion, kill him, and torment his followers.

I continued: For me, as a person who loves the Messiah, I must believe in his message.

In your book, the Messiah said: God is Only One God. [13]

Saint Paul said: three in one. [14]

In your book, the Messiah said:

I ascend onto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.[15]

Paul said: The Messiah is the only begotten son of God.[16]

In your book, the Messiah said: that I do nothing of myself.[17]

Paul said: Jesus is omnipotent.[18]

In your book, the Messiah said: My Father is greater than I.[19]

Paul said: God, in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.[20]

So please tell me, whom shall I believe now the Messiah or Paul?

The French visitor said: You know all that and you claimed that you don't have any information!! Would you allow me to take some photos because I have a necessary appointment to go to?

I told him: Please do!

What can God gain by your punishment, if you are grateful and you believe?

I have witnessed the most wonderful story in my life, which is about an American and a Japanese. I was so

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[13] (Mark 12:29).
[14] (Corinthians 12:3-6).
[15] (John 17:20).
[16] (Galatians 4: 4,5).
[17] (John 30:5).
[18] (John 5:15).
[19] (John 28:14).
[20] (Hebrews 3:1).

exhausted after a busy day. I had been informed that an American and a Japanese visitor were waiting for me. I doubted they were friends, but then I was surprised that they didn't know each other. They met each other in the center's waiting room; I invited them inside. Despite my exhaustion, I approved the visit.

The American kept asking questions always, a question after another. The Japanese spoke English fluently, but he was just listening carefully and didn't interrupt us. However, the American didn't give up asking questions abnormally, which made me doubt that he wanted to attack Islam and didn't ask to benefit from the information. Throughout those three hours, he asked me a lot of questions.

He requested that he wanted to learn and memorize chapter number (1) of the Qur'an (the opening), and he memorized it. Then, he asked to learn chapter number (112) (sincerity), and learn how to practice praying during his visit. That took him around three hours. Although I was exhausted, God provided me with patience. I understood that the American was an atheist and didn't have any religion from the questions he asked. Indeed, Christians don't attack God.

One of the questions he asked was: Why doesn't God admit the pretension that Jesus is His son? Does He feel jealous of Jesus?

I replied: If you send me a package with the postman, and I spread among the public that the postman was your son, would you accept that?

He said: No.

I said: Is it because you feel jealous of him?

He said: No, simply because he is not my son.

I said: So, you accept something for your Creator what you don't accept to yourself.

He asked: Why does God punish with the Hellfire?

I told him: What do you expect from God to do with those who tortured children with chemical weapons, as an example, to let them go to Paradise directly?

I told him: Also, someone who disowned his mother and father, humiliated them and kicked them out of the house to the street, as another example. How do you feel towards this man?

He said: I feel great wrath.

I said: If I told you I would let him in my house, feed him, praise him for this (wrong) deed, would you value my act? Would you accept it?

He said: No.

I said: What do you expect from God to do with the one who denies the existence of his Creator and disbelieves in Him?

Whoever is being punished in the Hellfire seems to be put in the right position.

It is a just judgment that Hellfire is their final abiding place. It will be like placing a thing in its rightful element. They do not deserve the beauty and peacefulness of Paradise as they disdained peace while on earth.

And even if they were sent back, they would revert to what they were forbidden. They are liars. [21]

This means that their sin is not limited in time, but it is an eternal merit.

On the Day when God will resurrect them altogether—they will swear to Him, as they swear to you, thinking that they are upon something. Indeed, they themselves are the liars. [22]

So, they also face God with false swears on the Day of Judgement.

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[21] (Qur'an 6: 28).

[22] (Qur'an 58 :18).

But the ones who deny Our verses and are arrogant toward them - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.[23]

Evil comes from envious and jealous people. It is fair that the Hellfire will be their reward, which copes with their nature (evil).

The attribute of justice that God has requires that He should be vengeful alongside His mercy. In Christianity, God is only love, and in Judaism He is rage. In Islam, He is Just and Merciful, and He has all ideal names, which are qualities of Beauty and Grace.

I said furthermore: Practically, in life, we use fire to isolate impurities from a purified substance like silver and gold. God the Almighty, the Ideal, uses the Hellfire to purify His servants from sins and evils, and finally, those who have one atom of belief are released from it (the Hellfire) by Mercy of God.

He said: I want a tangible argument proving God's existence.

I told him: You are asking for the weakest argument. We see the rainbow and the mirage, and we believe they exist, but they don't have any tangible existence! Moreover, we believe in the presence of the law of gravity without seeing it because science has proven it.

The sights do not apprehend Him, yet He apprehends the sights, and He is the All-attentive, the All-aware. [24]

Merely, thinking that you can grasp God's total perception is a symptom of ignorance about Him. The car may guide you to the sea, but it doesn't let you go into it. For example, if I asked you how much the seawater is by liter and you answered with any number, you would be

[23] (Qur'an 7:36).
[24] (Qur'an 6: 103).

considered ignorant. If you responded by saying: “I don't know” you would be all-knowing. The only path to know God is His signs in the world and His verses in His book, The Qur’an[25].

He asked: Why do you not think that other gods give provisions and cure diseases?

I replied: Did anyone other than God claim to be the sustainer or the healer so that we would substantiate the validity or invalidity of their allegations?

You can even notice that all people direct to only One Truth and plead to only One God when facing trouble.

Science proved that the entire universe consists of one matter, and proved the same building system of the universe by studying the universal aspects and phenomena and the similarity and symmetry in the universe.

For example, in families, when the father and mother argue over a life decision, they may lose their children and destroy their future. So, can you imagine what would happen if two or more gods are managing the universe?!

If there were in the heavens and earth gods besides God (Allah), they both would have been ruined. So exalted is God, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe. [26]

He asked: Can that Creator give life to a dead body here before my eyes?

I replied: Surprisingly, you atheists repeat the same questions as if you all previously agreed on them, though I believe you are sure they are irrational and illogical.

I added: If God gives life to dead before your eyes, you won't be convinced, just like it happened in Moses' peace be upon his story, and like the other miracles of the other

[25] From the sayings of Dr. Muhammad Rateb Nabulsi.
[26] (Qur’an 21: 22).

prophets they offered to their people. Their people were just accusing them that they were magicians!

Likewise, no messenger came to those before them, but they said, "A sorcerer or a madman." Did they recommend it to one another? In fact, they are rebellious people. [27]

And even if We were to send down angels unto them, and if the dead were to speak unto them and [even if] We were to assemble before them, face to face, all the things [that can prove the truth], they would still not believe unless God so willed But [of this] most of them are entirely unaware. [28]

The American man added: How come the Creator may punish His servants with endless torture for a few sins they committed in a short life span?

I told him: Most crimes lead to a life-in-prison verdict. So, is there anyone who argues that the life- in-prison verdict is unfair because the criminal committed his/her crime within few minutes? Is a ten-year sentence unjust because the criminal looted money for just one year? Hence, legal penalties aren't related to the period of crime commitment; Instead, they're related to the magnitude and cruelty of the crime.

Then he asked: Why did God (Allah) repeat the warning about hell? Doesn't that indicate His mercilessness and hatred towards us?

I told him: I exhaust my children by frequently alerting them that they must take care in their round trips whenever they travel or go to work. So, by doing that, do you consider me a harsh mother?! This is making things look upside down. You are turning mercy into harshness. God's alertness and warning for His worshipers is out of

[27] (Qur'an 51: 52-53).
[28] (Qur'an 6: 111).

His mercy towards them. He guided them towards the path of salvation and promised to exchange their evil deeds into good deeds when they seek forgiveness.

…he who believed and did the right, will have his evil deeds expunged by God and admitted to gardens with rivers flowing by, and abide there perpetually. This will be the great achievement of success. [29]

Indeed, God is the Merciful:

The American man continued saying: Then, why did God order Abraham to slaughter his son, isn't that cruelty?

I replied: Did God order you to do this? If we suppose that there is a person who claimed himself to be the smartest person in the whole world, he should be subjected to the hardest tests to prove his claim correct. Abraham peace be upon him was a Prophet and Messenger who received the revelation from God, and he declared that his love to God was above his love to any other thing, so God tested him to prove the love that Prophet Abraham claimed to have. Keep in mind that it was reported at the time of Abraham that the habit of offering people their sons as a sacrifice to God was common. So, God aimed to end that old habit and to replace it with offering animals as a sacrifice instead of sons.

He said: Why does God keep repeating in Qur'an that He loves the pious believers but doesn't like the disbelievers, aren't all of them His servants?

I told him: God guided all His servants to the path of salvation, and He emphasized that He disapproves the disbelief from His servants. God doesn't like the erratic behavior itself that humans may choose to adopt by his/her disbelief and corruption on earth.

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[29] (Qur'an 64:9).

If you disbelieve - indeed, God is Free from need of you. And He does not approve for His servant's disbelief. And if you are grateful, He approves it for you; and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. Then to your Lord is your return, and He will inform you about what you used to do. Indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts. [30]

I added: What do you say about a father who repeatedly tells his sons 'I am proud of all of you; no matter if you commit theft, murder, or corruption, you are just like any other pious and devoted son to me'? Simply, the most reasonable opinion about the father is that he is just like a devil who urges his sons to do evil deeds!

He said: But why does God keep reminding us in the Qur'an about the blessings He granted us with, when those blessings are merely nothing compared to what He owns. What is unique in this case?

I replied: God reminds us of the blessings He bestows on us to protect us from ourselves; we may show gratitude and thank someone else other than Him. If we don't worship Him, we would worship someone else. When I gain fortune or feel the euphoria of success and feel proud of my breakthroughs, I thank my own self unintentionally. It is as if I attribute my achievements to my own abilities which are already given to me by God. At that very moment, I would open the Qur'an to read the verse which says: **And my success is not but through God**[31], so that it opens my eyes and I thank God.

I added: If someone gave you a gift, would you feel happy for the gift itself or for its indication of that person's love to you?

[30] (Qur'an 39: 7).
[31] (Qur'an 11: 88).

The greatness of the gift is derived from its source/giver. If I gave you 100 dinar and the king gave you one dinar, you would be happier for the one dinar that the king gave to you more than the 100 dinars I gave you, and you would spread the news over social media.
The Japanese man listened without interfering throughout the three hours.
The American man then asked again: Isn't it considered harshness when God (Allah) accounts us for things He initially wrote for us?
I said: I will give you an example. Let's say that you want to buy something from the store, and decide to send your first son specifically to buy that thing. It is because you previously know that your first son is wise. He will straight away go and purchase what you exactly want while you know that your other son will get busy playing with his friends and the money may be lost; this is an assumption which you built your judgments on.
I continued: Predestination does not contradict with freedom of choice as God predestines us based on His complete knowledge of what our preferences and intentions will be.
Our deeds are foreknown to God in His Record, but they are not preordained for us against our will. They are only preordained in His Prescience. In the same way, we may foresee in light of our children's characters' knowledge, they will make a wrong choice before they make it. We did not impose their choice upon them against their will, even though we may have expected that choice. God preordains the intentions and hearts of man; if these are evil, man will come to evil; if good, good will be his fate.

I also told him: Man, in his freedom, may act contrary to what satisfies God, but he cannot do anything in contradiction to His Will. God granted us the freedom to

transgress against His wishes (we disobey Him) but He gave no one the freedom to transcend His Will.

He said: So why does God permit transgression of His orders?

I said to him: Sometimes my child, for example, insists on touching the fire and I say don't touch it, but at a certain point, when I find him stubborn, I let him touch it to learn from his experience. I know from my son's personality that he won't learn unless he tries. God is the All-Knowing. He knows the nature of His creation, and that they won't learn unless they try. So, we find that some people face simple afflictions from God and some face difficult ones. This could be because that person won't return to God without trials and affliction. This is all based on the knowledge of God.

He said: Why does God compel us to believe?

I replied: Has God forced you to believe in Him? Here you are standing before me claiming that you don't believe in Him. Our experience further affirms the freedom that it is impossible under any pressure to compel the heart to accept anything it does not want to. We can force anyone through threats and force them to stay with us, but no pressure whatsoever can make them love us. God has safeguarded our hearts from all forms of compulsion and duress. Therefore, God judges according to the heart and rewards according to intention, which is visible to no-one but Him.

There was a surprise at the end of the visit; the American man asked me to take pictures inside the mosque.

Meanwhile, the Japanese man came to me and said: I like this religion, what a great religion it is! I want to embrace this religion.

It was a fantastic surprise because he never had any reaction towards the previous conversation. He was just listening during the whole visit! The Japanese testified in front of the American there is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God. The American congratulated him, and the Japanese asked me more details about practicing this religion. I gave him the Islamic Centre's phone number in Tokyo, and he promised me that he will continue this path.

God will bring forth a people He will love and who will love Him:

Those [angels] who carry the Throne and those around it exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed, [saying], "Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire. [32]

God's love and mercy for His servants, manifests in creating them, honoring them and guiding them to the right path.

And We have certainly established you upon the earth and made for you therein ways of livelihood. Little are you grateful. And We have certainly created you, [O Mankind], and given you [human] form. Then We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam"; so, they prostrated, except for Iblees (the devil). He was not of those who prostrated. [33]

One of the most delicate gestures in the Qur'an is God mentioning His love to His servants before mentioning

[32] (Qur'an 40: 7).
[33] (Qur'an 7: 10 - 11).

the servants' love to Him. That's out of His great subtlety vast mercy to them.

...God will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him. [34]

Also, one of the subtle gestures in the noble Qur'an is that God's mercy manifests even in the humans' afflictions of tests and trials.

Should I take other gods apart from Him, who would neither be able to intercede for me nor save me if the Most Gracious brings me harm? [35]

If "the Most Gracious" desires harm for a person, then this necessarily leads to the mercy and kindness of God. So, in this case, what seemed to be harmful, in fact, turns out to be merciful and good for the believer because "the Most Gracious" does not emanate from Him except mercy, kindness.

...but perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And God Knows, while you know not. [36]

By the mercy of God, He distributed the livelihoods among human beings and made them the needs that one of them decides for the other to achieve cooperation among them in a way that benefits everyone. If each of them dispensed with one another, their interests would be disrupted.

By his mercy, He made the rich and poor among them, the honored and servile, the helpless and capable. Also, He kept the Divine door giving and Virtue open to compete in it and forever be attached to it.

Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We who have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of this world and have raised some of

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[34] (Qur'an 5: 54).
[35] (Qur'an 36: 23).
[36] (Qur'an 2: 216).

them above others in degrees [of rank] that they may make use of one another for service. But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate. [37]

God's mercy also manifests in His sharia laws and commandments, which are mere goodness and compassion to the creations regarding the providence of guidance and their religion's preservation. Also, regarding the protection of themselves, their bodies, their minds and thoughts, their honors and kinship, their offspring, and the conservation of their money and properties. All laws and rules related to those previously mentioned five essentials were merely sent as a mercy to people to safeguard and protect them from corruption and aggression, along with breaking the ice between people. Also, to keep them away from hardships and difficulties, and to preserve everyone's rights to be able to live in a healthy secure and happy society/environment, as the right of having a healthy society is one of the life rights pillars.

And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals. And God does not like corruption. [38]

Ibn Al-Qayyim said[39]: " God inspired David peace be upon him saying: 'O David, if only the people who go astray from me know how much I wait for them to come back towards me, how kind I am to them, and how I long to them to give up their sins. If they just know about that all, they would die out of their love to me. O David, if this is the case of My Will for those who go away from me, what about for those who come towards me! '".

[37] (Qur'an 43: 32).
[38] (Qur'an 2: 205).
[39] Mentioning it only out of taking parable and moral from it.